



**STATEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS FOR THE
BUSINESS MEETING OF THE SYBIL BRAND
COMMISSION FOR INSTITUTIONAL INSPECTIONS**

**500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, ROOM 372
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012
<http://sbc.lacounty.gov>**

Wednesday, August 19, 2015

10:00 AM

AUDIO LINK FOR THE ENTIRE MEETING. (15-3998)

Attachments: [AUDIO](#)

Present: Chairperson Eleanor R. Montañó, Commissioner Donald S. Andrews, Commissioner Johanna Arias-Bhatia, Vice Chairperson Barbara Bigby, Commissioner Susan Burton, Commissioner Percy Duran III, Commissioner Keren M. Goldberg, Commissioner Cheryl Grills Ph.D. and Commissioner Theresa Zhen

Excused: Commissioner Anne S. Hill

Staff present: Bolaji Famuyiwa, Roy Sinclair and Jenny Kimbell. (15-3997)

Call to Order. (15-3909)

Chairperson Montañó called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m.

Chairperson Montañó led in the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a moment of silence.

I. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTER

- 1. Approval of the August 12, 2015 Minutes. (15-3910)**

During the discussion of the minutes Commissioner Goldberg suggested that rather than moving right on to the other items on the agenda immediately following the Department representatives' report at the monthly business meetings, the Commission should set time aside to confer and discuss the reports presented in order to ascertain the next course of action. Commissioner Goldberg then made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Arias-Bhatia to commit the business meetings which are held on the third Wednesday's of each month strictly to hear and discuss the departmental reports.

Discussing Commissioner Goldberg's motion, Commissioner Andrews expressed that committing the third Wednesday meetings strictly to hear and discuss departmental reports may not be feasible since the Commission is considering reducing the number of its meetings to twice a month. Validating Commissioner Andrews' concern, Commissioner Theresa Zhen made a motion to amend Commissioner Goldberg's motion to extend the time frame for the business meetings to three hours to allow the Commission enough time to discuss the reports presented by the department representatives and any other Commission matters listed on agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Burton and carried unanimously.

The Commissioners also discussed changing the third Wednesday meeting time from 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. The Commission will decide on the matter at the next meeting based on the availability of the meeting room.

After discussion, on motion of Commissioner Donald S. Andrews, seconded by Commissioner Percy Duran, III, unanimously carried, the August 12, 2015 minutes were approved.

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

II. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

2. Department of Auditor-Controller (AC). (15-3911)

Ms. Michele Day, AC, Group Home Ombudsman, distributed copies and reported on the Children's Group Home Ombudsman Activity Report during the month of July 2015:

There were a total of 16 Hotline Requests for Assistance Calls.

- 13 Youth callers
- 3 Adult callers

Ms. Day also reported that there were no outreach visits during the month.

3. Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). (15-3912)

Patricia Bolanos Gonzalez, Children Services Administrator II, Out of Home Care Management Division, DCFS, reported that during the month of July 2015 there were a total of 664 Absent Without Leave (AWOL) and the child abuse hotline received a total of 24 referrals in the following categories:

July 2015 referrals

- **1 Emotional Abuse**
- **6 Physical Abuse**
- **8 General Neglect**
- **8 Sexual Abuse**
- **1 Other (Regulatory Violations)**

During the same reporting period 28 referrals were closed in the following categories:

- **13 Physical Abuse**
- **7 Sexual Abuse**
- **5 General Neglect**
- **2 Emotional Abuse**
- **1 Caretaker Absence and incapacity**

The referrals were closed for the following reasons:

- **8 Unfounded**
- **13 Inconclusive**
- **6 Evaluated out**
- **1 Substantiated**

Ms. Bolanas-Gonzalez also provided the Commission with a report of AWOL activity with a list of the Group Homes responsible. Ms. Bolanos-Gonzalez further reported that Bayfront Group Home has been placed on hold.

Commissioner Goldberg requested that DCFS investigate the issues with the Group homes that have a high number AWOL's.

4. Internal Services Department (ISD).

- Status report on the unsatisfactory findings at Camp Mendenhall on June 19, 2015. (15-3913)

Mr. Brian Lear, Building Crafts Superintendent, (ISD), reported that the issues at Camp Mendenhall have been resolved. Mr. Lear stated that he contacted ISD's District Manager and informed Bureau Chief Luis Dominguez and ISD went out and repaired the urinals, hot water, installed an Evacuation Plan and basketball court backboards.

Mr. Mike Varela stated that Probation has a new policy in place regarding work orders and he will forward a copy to staff.

5. Department of Mental Health (DMH).

- Analysis of medication and demand for Mental Health services. (15-3914)

There was no representative present to report.

6. Probation Department (PD). (15-3915)

Mr. Michael Varela, Director of Camp Gonzales and Dorothy Kirby Center, reported that the PD is in the process of transferring directors to different camps to increase productivity. Mr. Varela also reported that Dorothy Kirby Center will be hosting a prom on August 27, 2015 and invited the Commission to attend. He further reported that the college program has resumed and students have enrolled with campuses such as Los Angeles Trade Technical College and Mission College.

Ms. Pamela Pease, Supervising Deputy Probation Officer, Group Home Monitoring and Investigations Unit, Placement Services Bureau, PD, provided the status of group home AWOLs for the month of July 2015 as follows:

There were 111 youth AWOLs:

- 44 Remain AWOL
- 46 Returned to group homes
- 2 Camp Community Placement
- 15 Placed in Juvenile Hall
- 1 HOP
- 2 County Jail
- 1 Terminated

Ms. Pease also provided the Commission with a report of the monthly status report of group home AWOLs for the month of July 2015.

7. Sheriff's Department (SD).

- Update report on the maintenance of Inglewood courthouse
- Report on how the inmate welfare funds are utilized to benefit the inmates
- Report on the number of inmates on the EBI Program (15-3916)

Captain Patrick Jordan distributed the Sheriff's Department Inmate Welfare Fund (IWF) Expenditure and Revenue summary for the 2014-2015 Fiscal Year. Captain Jordan reported that the proceeds of the IWF are generated by inmate phone calls, commissary purchases, vending machine purchases, the Jail Enterprise Unit and contract meals. The expenditures include newspapers, cable TV, MTA bus tokens, ISB business operation, education, salaries for ISB and non-ISB staff/operational and facilities projects, portable toilets, inmate indigent kits and portable storage.

Captain Jordan also provided the Commission with an overview of the Education Based Incarceration (EB) Bureau. The layout displays the EBI monthly enrollment, number of completions and what facilities support the EBI programs. The EBI program consists of high school and charter schools, John Muir, New Opportunities and 5 Keys that received their funding from the state. AB-109 inmates can reduce their sentence by six weeks upon completion of the six week program. The EBI programs teaches life skills, aid inmates in learning an new way of life, provide educational services for the mentally ill and gender responsive programs.

Captain Jordan also answered other IWF and EBI related questions posed by the Commission.

III. COMMISSION REPORTS

8. Chairperson's Report on various items. (15-3917)

Chairperson Montaña shared the following Newspaper Articles with the Commission:

Daily Breeze

- **Supes May Revote on Jails (August 18, 2015)**

9. Treasurer's Report. (15-3918)

Commissioner Andrews reported that the balance of the Commissioner's Charitable Fund remains at \$408.90.

10. Staff Report on Correspondence Received and Department Representative Reports. (15-3919)

There was no report presented.

11. Commissioners' Reports on Group Home and/or Detention Facilities Inspections from August 13, 2015 to August 18, 2015. (15-3920)

During the reporting period, the following group homes/facilities were reported as being in satisfactory condition:

Chairperson Montaña and Commissioners Andrews visited.

- **Central Arraignment Court (Bauchet Street, Los Angeles, CA) on August 17, 2015.**
- **Downey Court (Imperial Highway, Downey, CA) on August 18, 2015.**

Commissioner Duran visited.

- **Central Juvenile Hall (Eastlake Ave., Los Angeles, CA) on August 17, 2015.**

Commissioners Grills and Burton visited.

- **Dangerfield III (73rd Street, Los Angeles, CA) on August 18, 2015.**

During the reporting period, the following group homes/facilities were reported as being in unsatisfactory condition:

Commissioner Zhen visited.

- Community Transition unit (Bauchet Street, Los Angeles, CA) on August 13, 2015 and reported the following:

Problems

Services are not strategically placed. County Department representatives with valuable information for linking needed services do not see any inmates until they have exited Inmate Reception Center and are feet from the door to their freedom. Only five to six inmates stop at the seven windows of various County department representatives each day on their way out the vast majority missing the chance for linkages into the community.

Ability to connect post released persons to jobs is woefully inadequate. Case workers report anecdotally that about 80% of people lose their jobs while incarcerated in jail. There is no program in this Community Transition Unit that directly employs people or provides sincere job seeking assistance.

The Community Transition Unit of the Inmate Reception Center is understaffed needing hundreds of Sheriff Deputies instead of only 25 who are processing 300 to 400 inmates for discharge on a daily basis.

Case Workers Inside Jails

Staffing levels are inadequate to meet the needs of inmates. There are only 2 case workers per facility (Twin Towers and MJC) to assist thousands of inmates on multiple floors and to respond to more than 100200 requests for assistance daily. Case workers can only provide information about public benefits, job assistance, and placement for drug treatment programs. Due to high demand, case managers have to "prioritize" inmate requests by inmate release date. Thus, inmates don't get reentry services until right before their release, if at all.

Some inmates are excluded from the reentry assistance, e.g., "high power, high risk" inmates, heavily medicated inmates.

At Twin Towers, where majority of population is mental health inmates who are heavily medicated, most inmates are not getting re-entry services.

Case workers are forced to serve concurrently as social workers and mental health therapists to individual inmates. Individual case management is recommended, but no staff capacity to do that.

Jail lockdowns are so frequent that case managers get interrupted or thwarted in their rounds. MCJ caseworker in particular reported trouble reaching individual inmates due to lockdowns.

Case managers only have a few hours per day of in-reach time. 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Shift change at 12:00 p.m. so lockdown, counts, rounds (no one in/out). There is no staff member doing an afternoon shift of in-reach.

- Van Nuys Court (Erwin Street Mall, Van Nuys, CA) on August 10, 2015 and reported that following:

Maintenance Issues

- Cell 1 - one broken toilet since December 2014
- Cell 2 - weak faucet
- Cell 4 - one broken toilet since December 2014
- Attorney Interview area: broken window
- Satellite cells: 327-E: broken sink
- Department 101: broken window

Overcrowding

Nearly all of the multiple person cells were over capacity. All benches were taken, inmates were sleeping on the floor, standing in the middle of the cell, and packed into the cell tightly. There was barely enough room to stand. Deputies report that the central lock up facility is often over capacity and they have to use the "overflow" cells. The central lock-up capacity is 148 and the satellite cells can hold more than 400.

Mental Illness

Inmates who are recently arrested and have not yet made contact with the jail are interviewed and classified as mentally ill by deputies who have little to no training in how to make such classifications.

The Senior Deputies reported that an inordinate number of mentally ill and violent inmates (K-12) come from jails with little information about how they should be housed. They also reported that there is not enough room to house them in the lock-up facility and thus deputies are required to use the overflow satellite cells (as well as staff resources). 70% of use of force involves these inmates.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Policy

The deputies notify ICE if there is an ICE hold on inmates who are in lock-up. **Disciplinary Measures “Safety Chair”:** There is a “safety chair” for disciplinary purposes. It is a specially designed chair to strap individuals in and physically restrain every part of their body (cannot move arms or legs). Sometimes inmates are forcibly placed in these chairs. **Use of Force:** There was reported use of force in spraying inmates (resulting in a need for decontamination)

No Lockup

- Commissioner Zhen visited Santa Monica Court and reported that this facility has no lockup.

IV. MISCELLANEOUS

Matters Not Posted

12. Matters not on the posted agenda, to be discussed and (if requested) referred to staff or placed on the agenda for action at a future meeting, or matters requiring immediate action because of an emergency situation or where the need to take action came to the attention of the Committee subsequent to the posting of the agenda. (15-3921)

There were no matters presented for a future agenda.

Public Comment

13. Opportunity for members of the public to address the Commission on items of interest that are within the jurisdiction of the Commission. (15-3922)

There were no members of the public present to address the Commission.

Adjournment

14. Adjournment for the meeting of August 19, 2015. (15-3923)

There being no further business, Chairperson Montaña adjourned the meeting of August 19, 2015 at 12:56 p.m.